

**Stress Management
for
Happiness**

Robin Liu

“Happiness is a choice. You can choose to be happy. There’s going to be stress in life, but it’s your choice whether you let it affect you or not.”

-Valerie Bertinelli

Welcome

How would your life look like if you were able to manage your stress and emotional state better?

Will you be happier and calmer? Will you be more efficient and productive? Will it be easier for you to build stronger relationship?

While it is not possible to have a stress free environment, it is possible to manage and leverage on your stress that will lead to a happier and calmer moments.

In this e-book, I will share with you some interesting facts and methods to help you deal and manage stress.

I have been interested in and research about stress management and resilience building. The content of this e-book is a compilation of what I have found to work not only for myself, but also for those I have worked with.

I hope that you will enjoy this e-book! It was a lot of fun creating it!

I wish you a lot of success and do let me know should you need any help.

Robin Liu

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CHAPTER ONE

STRESS

This is something that we will all face no matter who you are, be it you are a professionals, stay at home parents, students, young or old. Stress is felt by all of us, there is no such thing as stress free environment. Even to create a stress free environment can be stressful for whoever is in-charge of this project.



Thus, stress management is important regardless of what you do, who you are and which stage in life you are at. An example of importance of stress management can be illustrated when you are a leader of a team. How you respond to a stressful situation will either cripple and demoralize or strengthen and motivate your team. Whether your team turns out to be successful depends to a certain extent on your ability to manage your stress and resiliency. Having said that, stress is not all that bad, a little stress can also be motivating and pushes us into the discomfort zone that may result in grow and discovery.

There are always stress-free moments and ways to reduce stress. However, our stress level often rises when we are faced with problems, whether we can or cannot solve. Because of this our emotional states are affected. We become angry, sad, anxious or agitated. The impacts of stress can be seen and felt in 2 areas – our health and relationships.

Impact on our health:

Stress is a primal response to danger or threatening situation that ensures the survival of human species. There are researches that showed moderate stress helps us to improve our memory and alertness. But during high stress levels, it can be bad and toxic for our health.

When our bodies are faced with high stress situation, the section within our brain, the amygdala becomes active. It caused our body to go into a flight or

fight mode, by releasing stress hormones and signaling our respiratory system to work harder and faster. These stress hormones like Cortisol and Adrenaline, which gives you the energy to fight or flight.

However, when our bodies are subjected to constant high stress levels, these hormones will affect our body by aging us faster and weaken our immune system. With higher heart rate and blood pressure, it increases our risk of heart attack and stroke. As a result, it might lead to the following medical conditions:

- Hypertension;
- Increased risk of stroke and heart attack;
- Lowered immunity;
- Stomach and digestion trouble;
- High blood pressure;
- Obesity;
- Diabetes; and
- Reproductive issues.

Impact on our relationship:

When we are highly stressed, our emotional states are often not stable. Due to our emotional swing arising from our stress levels, our stress can induce stress on those around us as well. Hence, stress can be contagious.

Some researches have shown that chronic stress can have an impact on the overall emotional health of a family. These researches observed that children who are under stress and / or experienced stress at home, often are overweight and / or feeling sadness.

Besides children, the emotional state under stress can also led to poor work relationships and strained marital relationships. This happens when one starts to distance oneself from and tries to avoid arguments with their co-workers or partners.

Thus, having a good stress management strategy and techniques can have a positive and good impact on our relationships both at work and home.

I am sure the above two impacts are reasons enough for us to treat stress management seriously. The good news is that we are in control and there are ways to manage our stress. In this way, we can minimize the impacts of stress on our health and relationships. Here are the several ways to control and manage our stress. These methods are classified into 5 broad categories as follows:

- 1) Distraction Creation;
- 2) Mindset Shift;
- 3) Habits and Routines;
- 4) Lifestyle and Health; and
- 5) Mental Resilience.

CHAPTER TWO

DISTRACTION CREATION

Sometimes the quickest way to handle our stress is to create distractions. These distractions give us time and space to relax, refocus and redirect our energies elsewhere. This is important when you find yourself dwelling too long on a problem or an issue that you have no control or solutions to. This will cause you to be frustrated, and may even feel anxious. By creating distractions allow you to redirect your thoughts to something that will relax you and help to refocus your mind. Below are some ways that you can do to distract your thoughts.



Meditation and Mindfulness:

Meditation is an easy to learn exercise that will almost immediately calm your mind and leaving you feeling relaxed. Meditation is not as many myths or misconception out there, it is not difficult to learn and can be practiced anywhere.

The simplest form of meditation technique is to focus on your breathing. This technique is easy and can be practiced while you are sitting down, walking down the street or even doing simple tasks, like ironing your clothes. All you need to do is to concentrate on your breathing as follows:

- 1) Be in whatever comfortable position or whenever you are ready;
- 2) Inhale, while counting to 4;
- 3) Hold your breath while counting to 2;

- 4) Exhale, while counting to 6; and
- 5) Repeat several times.

When doing this, you will find yourself calmer than you started and will gain a more positive outlook. Most people will be distracted by their thoughts, the trick is whenever you find yourself being distracted by any thoughts, refocus back on your breath. By doing this as a practice often enough, your stress and anxiety will be significantly lowered.

Exercise:

Sometimes the best way to let out your frustrations and pended up emotions is to exercise. Exercise not only allows you to release your stress, but also gives you some space and time to sort things out. Whenever I am stuck with some issues with work, I find that by simply going out for a walk clears my mind and often finds different perspectives and solutions to my problems.

Exercises like taking a walk, going for a run, riding a bike or getting a workout at a gym, are great ways to improve your mood. That is because physical activity can induce our biological system to produce endorphins or the happy hormones. Besides, when you get out of your enclosed environment to the open, the breeze, fresh air and sounds of nature will lower your stress levels.

Music:

I will always play a list of my favorite music whenever I work on a project that is stressful. Music is another way to help us release stress and leaves us feeling relaxed. It does not have to be classical music, but any form of music that is your favorite. Either you turn on your stereo or just putting on your earphones.

Go ahead and start creating a playlist of all your favorite music and / or artistes. Immerse yourself with music and you will find yourself more relaxed and in a better mood.

Read a Book:

By reading a good book, whether it is frictional or non-frictional, your mind will start to forget what is stressing you out. As we read, our mind also starts to create the experience and sensation akin to having a vacation by transporting us to a different world.

Play with Your Pet:

There are clinical studies that show that a cat's purring can improve our health, also producing positive effects like reduced anxiety, relaxation and

stress relief. This is not only effective for spending time playing and petting your cats, but also other animals as pets.

That is because when we spend time with our pets, a chemical known as Oxytocin or the “love hormones” are released. This hormone helps to create a sense of calm and relaxation, which will help to build trust and encourages mental health by reducing stress and anxiety.

Thus, spending time with your pets is not only fun but also therapeutic.

CHAPTER THREE

MINDSET SHIFT

The techniques in the previous chapter are only temporal in nature, as a form of escape and distraction. They do not get to the root of why you are feeling stressed. The following chapters will suggest techniques and strategies that will help you to gain more control over your mental state.



By doing so, it will help you in gaining more harmony and control in your life through the reduction of the chances of any unexpected issues and situations. Hence, not only will your mental state be improved, your confidence will also received a booster shot.

Visualization:

Visualization is a very powerful tool that even sports psychologists utilized to train athletes. Visualization uses one of the most powerful faculties of our mind, imagination. During visualization, one imagines the situation that they want to be in, for example a salesperson making a successful sale. The visualization process also involves constructing finer details like sounds, smell and sensations.

You can use visualization in two ways:

- 1) Visualizing yourself in a calm, peaceful and happy place; or
- 2) Visualizing your stress by giving it a form, color, shape, movement and taste.

Both techniques allow you to achieve the lowering of your stress, helping you to cope with stress. The advantage of visualizing stress is that you can frame your stress into something finite and separate from yourself.

Thinking Grey:

Some times certain problems, challenges, issues or situations are just grey. It is neither black nor white. Rather than forcing yourself to find a particular solution and become stressed in the process, it might be better to adopt a more open method. Learning to think in a grey manner allows you to scan the horizons for more options, knowing that sometimes it is not necessary to have absolute and definite solution. This reduces your stress levels and feeling less overwhelmed with this simple shift in your mindset.

Opportunity in Stress:

As the old saying goes, if you can't beat them, join them. Sometimes you can leverage on the stress you have to motivate and push yourself to achieve better results. This has something to do with perception and mindset. When one views stress as a challenge and in a positive manner, they will most likely to thrive in stressful environment.

That is because such a person looks at the outcomes and results. They are pretty much driven by it. Hence, they will view positively and use stress as a tool. They are also more likely to be able to control their emotions and mental states better than the rest. This brings us to another point.

Control:

Everything in this world can be divided into things that we can control, and those that we do not have the control.

Sometimes our stress comes from our inability to recognize those things that are beyond our control. While we plan and wishes that everything falls under our control, this is not always the case. Hence, it becomes very disempowering and tiring when we stressed ourselves over such things.

Therefore in recognizing and accepting that some things are not within our control and perhaps the one factor we can exercise control is ourselves becomes liberating. This shift in mindset will significantly reduce our stress level and also allows us to view the problems, situations and challenges from a refreshing new ways.

Past and Future:

Just like driving a car, we look forward to make sure we are travelling in the correct direction so that we will reach our destination. We do not use the rear view mirror, but only for checking what is going on behind us.

So it is amazing how some would continue to live in the past hoping that it will get them where they want to go. What is worse is when one questions why

things happened to them, when things go wrong or they meet with a challenge. Such negativity and ruminating the past increases our stress levels and contributes to our poor emotional state.

Thus, by recognizing that the past are events that we learn from and something that we cannot change, while the future is yet to be and we can shape it by what we do now, empowers us. This gives us the positive energy to find the way to get where we want to go.

Power of Choice:

When one recognizes that they have the power of choice, it becomes rather liberating and empowering. They realized that they are not longer the victims, but the victors!

Choices comes from through the recognition of the only factor they can control is themselves. Hence, whatever happens depends on how they choose to respond, by scanning and evaluating the various options within their locus of control and influence, when dealing with whatever situations, issues and challenges. With this confidence of choice, stress will be greatly reduced and moderated.

When we are stressed while making a decision, and if we are not aware of the power of choice and control, we will tend to regret the decisions we made. This happens as we made decisions that are illogical, rash and emotion based.

With the recognition of choice and control, we will be able to recognize the stress building up and the emotions associated with it. That is where we are able to exercise that control and make a conscious choice not to react. And rather than reacting, we would be able to practice one of those distractions to calm ourselves down and respond to the situations.

The Imperfect Perfection:

In the pursuit of perfection, we often heap unrealistic demands on ourselves that ended up outing unnecessary stress on ourselves. It is when we begin to understand that perfection is a continuous journey of improvements and we will always be a work in progress; then the related stress level will dissipate.

Related to this is how we often view failures as something negative, which brings about the pressure to perform and not to fail. This caused one to experience stress and be affected emotionally. It is when we shift our mindset to see failures as a chance to find out more, learn and improve that it becomes more forgiving and positive. Again, when we shift our mindset as thus, our related stress level is moderated.

Urgent but Not Important:

In some ways we all have that superman and superwoman mentality. It seems that the world cannot do without us and we are needed to solve all problems urgently and immediately.

To burst your bubble, that is not true. The world does not end when you stop doing what you do. This mindset is especially true for founders and owners of businesses, who felt that they have to react to every question, issue, problem and request, or else their business will be destroyed.

If you recognize this fact that you do not have to react every incident, while training and letting your team gain that independence to handle, you will find that you have more time to plan, reflect and relax.

CHAPTER FOUR

HABITS AND ROUTINES

Habits that were created by us often not only affect our emotional states but also can be the source of our stress. Habits are formed through our conditioning and also repeated actions that we carry out each day. By recognizing which habit causes us stress we will be able to better manage our stress levels by changing those habits.



The way to changing habits is to establishing some form of new routines. It also involves creating new habits that supports our journey in stress management. Below are some ways to achieve it.

Planning:

If you do not have the habit of planning out your life, then it is worth start doing so. If you are not sure how to do so, you may consider seeking he help of a coach to do so. With these plans, it will allow you to anticipate where are your sources of stress and manage them before it hits you.

Having both short term and long term goals planned out with definite goals, milestones and action plans will help you stay focused. It will also help you to regain your perspectives when you find yourself starting to lose sight of your purpose.

Within your goals and plans, you should also set aside time for fun activities that you enjoy doing, like travelling or spending time with friends. This provides you with something to look forward to, which will help you maintain a positive outlook of your life.

When you Wake Up:

Most days I observe most people rush to work, starting their day already frustrated and stressed. I often wonder how can their day not be stressful? Hence, what time you wake up does make a difference.

It is a good habit to set your alarm clock to wake up earlier than you need to. By doing so, it provides you to have a proper breakfast, exercise, meditate and plan out your day. This allows you to start your day with good energy, relaxed and on a positive note.

One caution, get yourself a proper alarm clock rather than using your smart phone or tablet. Why? Because this has become a problem for some, when they wake up. Instead of getting into their routine, they started mindless scrolling, checking and replying to messages and emails. Before they know it, they are late for work and had to rush to work.

Organization:

Being organized helps you to remember and compartmentalize your day, week, month and year in a way that creates schedules and harmony that will boost efficiency. This allows you to alter your schedule when you are feeling overwhelmed.

One advantage of being organized is the ability for you to take an inventory of those tasks that are time-consuming that will drain away your time daily. Thus, you will be able to plan specific time to do these tasks at one go so that you will not have to do so daily. For example, if you need to post regularly on social media that may takes up an hour each day to do so. You can schedule a day each week to plan, create, search for image and schedule the posts to be shared for the entire week, instead of each day.

To stay organized, you can make use of the many apps that are available, or the traditional paper based journals, dairies and organizers.

To-do lists:

In organizing your day, it is advisable to create a to-do list. While many people find it frustrating and a bother to create such a list, but having such a list can help to create a sense of achievement and positivity, which will help you to over come stress. This arises because as you complete each of the tasks and marked them off on your to-do list, you will feel better and more in control with the tasks at hand.

Hence, it is important to create a to-do list first thing in the morning before starting anything else, like checking emails or messages or some other tasks. Make this as part of your daily morning routine, so that you can stay on track and milk the benefits from completing those tasks on your to-do lists.

Into the Flow:

Getting into the flow of things helps you to increase your productivity and focus. To get into that flow, you will have to remove distractions like social media, phone calls, emails, and etc. By protecting your time set aside for tasks, you will find that you complete them faster and more productive. Taking small breaks in between of 15 to 20 minutes to have a drink or quick chat / check will allow you to get back into the flow again. This enables you to manage your tasks and seeing your own productivity will makes you feel better and hence reduces your stress levels.

Related to this is how to handle emails? Why not schedule time to check your emails instead of checking and replying them when they get delivered into your inbox. You can set aside time say in afternoon and evening. This helps to ensure that it does not break your flow and productivity. By checking emails each time they arrive and breaking your flow, you will begin to lose focus and momentum that will contribute to your stress levels.

Milestones:

Milestones are indicators on a road to help travellers navigate and check their progress on a journey. Similarly, by setting milestones for your projects, tasks and work, you can have a better overview of how it is progressing. This is when you can celebrate and reward yourself whenever a milestone is reached. The resulting effects from knowing where and how are your projects, tasks and work are progressing are more confidence and calmer, hence less stressful.

One of the challenges we face is how and where to start with a huge task at hand. Often this leaves us feeling overwhelmed or worse, an excuse for procrastination. We have to remind ourselves that no matter how huge a task is, there is always a way to break them down into smaller bite size chunks. Hence, having a roadmap with milestones helps you to breakdown huge tasks. This will make the huge task less intimidating and with each step towards completing the milestones on the road map, you will that confidence and motivation to complete that huge task at hand. Don't you think this will significantly reduces the stress you feel about the huge task?

Trusted Confidante:

While it is good to be open to comments, feedback and opinions, but you should not be made to feel like you need to listen to everyone. No all feedback is useful and we need to learn how to identity those people who has credibility, who puts their skin in the game and who are genuine. Feedback from these people is worth looking at, rather than wasting your time sweating and stressing over those feedback that you can ignore.

CHAPTER FIVE

LIFESTYLE AND HEALTH

Let's face it; both our health and lifestyle will have substantial impact on how we feel about life and ourselves in general. The lack of exercises, activities and unhealthy diet is not only harmful for our physical health, but also our mental wellbeing. This will leave us more open to stress and emotional instability.

Thus, leading a healthier life and lifestyle will actually help you to manage your mental state, stress and emotions better.



Exercise:

We are back to exercising again. Besides being a distraction from your stressful environment, it can also help in other ways. Exercise allows you to flex your muscles and release all those tension being built up. Moreover, exercises like Yoga and Pilates practice breathing exercises that can further help in stress reduction. Being in good shape and physical state adds to our confidence and self-esteem will also further help moderate your stress levels.

Importance of Sleep:

Many of us seem to be mistaken and wear the lack of sleep to complete our tasks as a badge of honor. But the truth is that lack of sleep is actually bad for us, as we need quality sleep to recharge and refresh our mind and body. With a healthy sleep cycle and rest, our minds and body will be more alert and ready for the day's challenge.

Diet:

Various types of food and drinks will affect our metabolism and mood, which will either get us up and going or leave us feeling depressed and tired. Things like junk food and sodas will give us that sugar rush and makes us feel good for a short period, but they will harm our physical body and mood in the long term. Hence, it is better to choose a healthier diet that will aid in building up our physique and mood.

With diet, it is worth mentioning that we regulate our intake of caffeine. While caffeine can be a stress reducer and helps with productivity, too much of it is also known to cause anxiety and stress from overstimulation.

Reconnect with Nature:

Nature has a way to soothe our minds and bodies that most of us often neglect. Schedule some time off to unwind in a rural or nature reserve areas. Even if this is not possible, try spending some time during lunch in a park nearby. Enjoy the colours, sound and smell of nature, especially if this in a rural area or nature reserve. You will find that you can unwind that tension being built up and enjoy the peaceful, tranquility and silence.

Aromatherapy:

Aroma and scent has been shown to be able to modify our mood and emotion. Hence, it may be a good way to help you relieve your stress, uplift your mood and also to help you concentrate or focus on the task at hand. With essential oils readily accessible in the market these days, you do not have to be an aromatherapist to use them.

Support System:

To build a great community of friends gives you a strong support system when you are feeling stress or burnout. Rather than keeping and bottling up your emotions and stress, ask for help. You will find that by routinely interacting and have conversation with your family and friends helps to reduce your stress. You feel more connected with your loved ones and finding comfort in knowing that there is some form of support cheering you on.

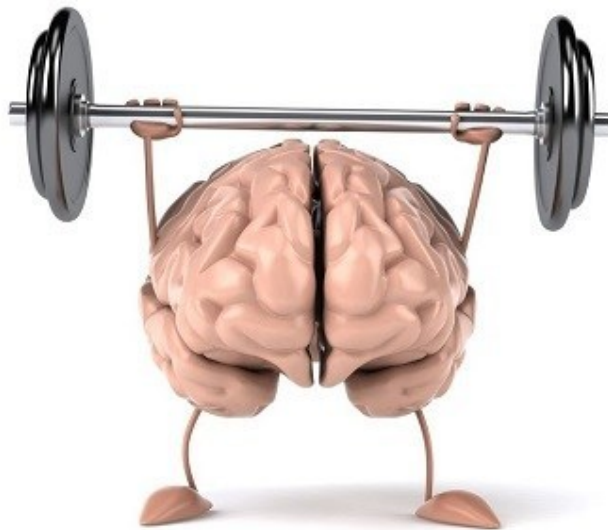
Hug is a Wonderful Thing:

When you are stressed, ask for a hug. Research does show that hugs can reduce blood pressure in adults and uplift our moods and emotions. This is way better and healthier than a sugar fix to reduce our stress.

CHAPTER SIX

MENTAL RESILIENCE

What is resilience? It is described as the way an individual can bounce back when faced with anxiety and stressful situations, challenges or issues. It is also about an individual being able to utilize methods to successfully deal with such situations, challenges and issues. Some may also argue that it is more than bouncing back, but also bounce forward to move beyond these situations, challenges or issues presented.



Good news is that resilience is a skill that can be learnt. It is a mindset that an individual chooses to live with and achieve. Resilience is not a suit or armor, but rather something that is flexible and adaptable. It is also about being self-aware and authenticity that will enhance performance and focus.

Reward Yourself:

We can be too tough on ourselves at times. When we achieve something or overcome difficulties, we do not praise or reward ourselves. So if you have cause for celebrations and to reward yourself, do so. Do something nice for yourself.

On the flip side, if you have never challenge yourself and push yourself over the comfort zone, maybe you should try. Do something you have never done before to experience that adrenalin rush. This will provide you will new learning opportunities and a brand new perspective on your life and the world.

Time Out for Yourself:

Self-care is not selfishness or wanting to be isolationist. But self-care is need for taking the time out to relax, refocus, rebalancing and simply be where you are. This can be done no matter where you are or what you are doing. Simply take some time off to quiet down, breath and relax to bring peace within our mind, which will refresh our bodies, more than taking naps. The resulting effect is reduction of our stress.

Smile:

Smiling will not only make you more pleasant and approachable, it comforts the people around you, which include you as well! A smile will improve your mood and prompts your body to release endorphins that will relieve your stress. Furthermore, by making yourself more pleasant and approachable, you will find that it will be easier to connect and make friends around you. This will increase your confidence, self esteem and also puts you in a better mood.

Laugh is the Best Medicine:

As the maxim goes, laughter is the best medicine. In times of difficult situations and challenges, laughter not only able to lighten the mood, but also helps us to relieve and better at coping with our stress.

So when you feel stressed and tense, you can consider picking up a good comedy shows or videos of your favorite animal blunders, reading your favorite comics or even just spending quality time with a friend who makes you laugh. If you are game, you can also look for your local practitioners of laughter yoga. This will allow you to feel relaxed and happy after each session.

Vent it

Whenever you are feeling stressed, tense or emotional, find a safe and health outlet for it. Do not bottle these feelings, as it will affect your mental health in the long run. How you vent is really up to you. Some may choose to write them down on a piece of paper and then throw or burn them away after that. Some may choose to write it as a dairy. Some may choose to go down to the beach and shout at the sea. Some may choose to go down to the gym to work out. No matter what methods you use, you will feel less stress and tense when you have expressed yourself. This will help you to maintain a clear and balance state of mind, that will reduce your stress levels.

Don't be afraid to say, "No":

With a limited amount of time per day, you cannot afford to agree to everything that comes your way. Whether you are trying to please others or to impress, you will end up overloaded, not being able to deliver and all stressed up. This will not only

damage the very image you tried to create, but also affects your own mental health. Hence, it will be advantageous for you to know how to reject certain things in a polite and professional manner. This is to prevent overloading and thus managing your stress levels.

Spend time with your loved ones:

Just as I have mentioned in the earlier chapters, having support groups and playing with your pets will help you to manage your stress levels. Besides that it makes you more resilient, knowing that you have someone to fall back on and providing you with support.

Triggers:

By knowing what are the triggers that cause you to stress out, you will be able to manage your stress level better. It will also contribute to your resiliency, as from these triggers you will be able to identify which are within your control and which are not. With this in mind, you will learn not to be too stressed out or reacting to those that is beyond your control. While those within your control, you know you can do something to reduce your stress. The net result is a calmer, relaxed and resilient you.

Scratching Each Other's Back:

Being resilient is learning to connect with others and not to isolate ourselves. By connecting with others, we are in a position to offer and / or ask for help. This will also moderate our stress levels as we have a community of different people with different skills and expertise who can help us whenever we needed, even as we offer our expertise and knowledge to help others.

Self-Judging:

As my mentor says, when life throws you a lemon, open a bottle of tequila and invite your friends to celebrate! What you made of the many things life throws at you depends on yourself and your mindset. Whenever you are faced with setbacks, it is not the end of the road, but simply lessons to be learnt so that we can be better. Whenever we receive a rejection and others say "No", it just meant we move on to the Next Opportunity. We are a work in progress and are never perfect, but we can aspire to be perfect by taking that first step to perfection by constantly improving ourselves.

So don't judge yourself, but be kind to your self.

Self-compassion:

This brings me to having self-compassion. Compassion is to begin with ourselves through the realization that we are human – we err, we have emotions and we are not perfect.

Hence, with this realization, we should be more compassionate to ourselves and to allow for our emotions, failings and imperfections. Rather than suppressing and exert unrealistic expectations on ourselves, that will increase our stress and the feeling of beyond our control.

Gratefulness:

I choose to start my day every morning, remembering all the wonderful things that I am blessed and grateful for. Even for the simple fact that I am alive and able to wake up in the morning, I am already grateful for it. This simple act of acknowledging and remembering our blessings allow us to focus on being positive for the rest of the day.

One way to do this is to list down as many things as possible within 1 minute all the things you are grateful for and blessed with. This list will serve as a reminder for you when the tough gets going and lift you out of stress and depression.

The other method is to list down 3 things before you retire in the evening, which happened to you in the day that you are blessed or grateful for. Include the reasons why.

Stop plotting revenge:

As Mahatma Gandhi once said an eye for an eye only ends up making the whole world blind. Thus, by reacting through plotting and exacting revenge, it may not make you a winner. In fact, it may end up making all of us losers. While it is very tempting to extract justice for the wrong you felt because of some actions of others, we have to understand why do we need to react this way?

Stress encourages anger, irrationality and quick reaction without much due consideration to consequences. But being resilient encourage one to be calm, level headed, more self aware of the situation and choosing the response appropriate for the circumstances.

Hence, by being resilient in such situation, you are in better control of yourself and your emotions, as well as stress levels. You are clear, calm and collected in mind, measured in your response that will generate a win – win situation.

Leverage on Stress:

In the beginning of this e-book, I have alluded to the fact that stress may not be all that bad. Having stress can also be motivating, empowering and emboldening. It pushes us to want to achieve, lift us out of lethargy and leads us into a discomfort zone.

Using the Japanese sword making process to illustrate a point. The process of making the toughest, finest and sharpest sword there is, the Japanese craftsmen mixed, heated, folded and cooled the alloy metal used in the sword making, pounding the metal as they go. This process has the effects of strengthening and hardening the metal so much that it can split a bullet firing at the blade made from this metal. The constant stress that the metal undergone through the heating, cooling, folding and hammering process contributes to this hardening of the metal.

This is the same for us, as we learn how to manage stress, we will also be more confident in leveraging stress to enhance our productivity, mental resilience, staying motivated and embolden ourselves to push beyond our comfort zone. This will result in a stronger and better person that we are before, each time you leverage on stress and conquer each situation. When you start to develop this mindset, you will welcome stress, as you are confident in managing and leveraging on your stress without adverse effect on both your physical and mental health.

Afterword:

In this e-book, I have shared with you many methods, techniques and tools that I have research, being taught and have used them myself to manage and overcome stress. The reason for me sharing some many of them instead of a few are because based on my own experience, only a few of them appeal to me.

But whichever methods, techniques or tools you choose, the key is you taking action and putting them into practice consistently over time. As a Chinese saying “If you work at it hard enough, you can grind an iron rod into a needle”.



Robin is a transformation life coach, who is passionate about making a difference in the lives of others. He specialised in stress management and resilience training. He has been coaching people on leadership, stress and emotional management, as well as working towards goal achievements and team building. Through coaching, he helps many to gain clarity and focus on their goals and pathways, which resulted in detailed action plans that enable them to reach their goals and fulfilling their dreams, transforming their lives. Robin has also been teaching and guiding private clients in non-religious and result-based meditation techniques, guiding them towards a happier and more fulfilled life.

With more than 19 years of corporate experience in Public, Private and Non-Profit organisations holding various leadership roles in strategic and resource planning, operations, budgeting, facilities management, people and change management and business continuity management. He completed his training with SMU's International Corporate Coaching Certificate, and obtaining a Graduate Diploma in Applied Positive Psychology and certification in Positive Psychology Coaching under Dr Robert Biswas-Diener. Robin obtained his coaching credentials from the Worldwide Association of Business Coaches and membership in Asian Pacific Alliance of Coaches and International Coach Federation. He also studied with Vikas Malkani, World's No.1 Wisdom Coach, as a certified meditation teacher.

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